



City of La Porte

Established 1892

Police Department

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the Texas Association of Police Chiefs



Media Relations Information for 01/13/2016

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**La Porte police join local faith-based groups and concerned citizens
in dialogue concerning places of worship**



In an effort to be proactive in ensuring that members of local faith communities can safely and securely meet and worship, the La Porte Police Department hosted three separate special workshops on Tuesday, January 12th for area pastors and clergy members. More than 50 local participants attended the training and discussed the fact that acts of violence and vandalism occurring nationally have been on the rise at places of worship. With this in mind, participants engaged in constructive planning efforts with members of the police department in an effort to collaboratively develop strategies designed to prevent these destructive incidents from occurring within local churches.

Attendees were very committed to progress in this area, due to the unfortunate reality that safety and security is becoming increasingly important for churches, synagogues and faith-based service providers throughout the county. Course attendees were exposed to the unfortunate reality that their parishes must now be prepared for a variety of threats and crisis situations, such as medical emergencies, domestic violence, child care protection, and disruptive or violent visitors. Such topics are significant, as National statistics reveal that almost half of our nation's churches with more than 200 attendees do not yet have a formal security program in place for their congregation during worship services.

Representatives at the January 12th event learned about the importance of developing a safety/security policy and a child protection policy, as well as being able to recognize high risk areas in their place of worship and offices. Attendees were also guided in developing a church/synagogue/temple security assessment checklist that includes persons and property defense, financial safeguards, transportation security and mission team protection.

Due to the overwhelming response to this training, the Police Department has announced plans for a second set of block-instructions at the police facility. Once finalized, these dates will be formally announced. Anyone with questions, or wishing to attend this training, may contact LPPD's Support Services Division at 281-842-3183.